

CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Marshal Division

Information Bulletin



Commercial Kitchen Hood Cleaning

The exhaust hood is an integral part of ensuring the safety for all commercial cooking operations. The exhaust system is intended to remove grease laden vapors, steam, heated air, and other products of combustion to a safe location outdoors. In order for the hood to operate properly, and to ensure the fire suppression system has the ability to function as designed, the hood system must be routinely cleaned, serviced, and maintained.

Owners, landlords, and tenants are responsible for ensuring routine maintenance, service, and cleaning of the various systems, such as the exhaust hoods, to ensure it is in proper working order and that you are in compliance with the code. The responsibility to maintain these systems is typically inherited by the tenant unless the responsibility is specifically assumed by another party through a contract, lease, or other agreement.

The 2012 edition of the International Fire Code (IFC) was adopted throughout the State of South Carolina on July 1st, 2013. This edition of the code **has expanded on the minimum expectations** for cleaning of commercial kitchen hoods. The information contained below is provided from the 2012 IFC and will be considered the minimum acceptable routine for commercial kitchen hood cleaning:

609.3.3 Cleaning. Hoods, grease-removal devices, fans, ducts and other appurtenances shall be cleaned at intervals as required by Sections 609.3.3.1 through 609.3.3.3

609.3.3.1 Inspection. Hoods, grease-removal devices, fans, ducts and other appurtenances shall be inspected at intervals specific in Table 609.3.3.1 or as approved by the fire code official. Inspection shall be completed by qualified individuals.

**Table 609.3.3.1
Commercial Cooking System Inspection Frequency**

Type of Cooking Operation	Frequency of Inspection
High-volume cooking operations such as 24-hour cooking, charbroiling or wok cooking	3 months
Low-volume cooking operations such as places of religious worship, seasonal businesses and senior centers	12 months
Cooking operations utilizing solid fuel-burning cooking appliances	1 month
All other cooking operations	6 months

609.3.3.2 Grease accumulation. If during the inspection it is found that hoods, grease-removal devices, fans, ducts or other appurtenances have an accumulation of grease, such components shall be cleaned.

609.3.3.3 Records. Records for inspections shall state the individual and company performing the inspection, a description of the inspection and when the inspection took place. Records for cleanings shall state the individual and company performing the cleaning and when the cleaning took place. Such records shall be completed after each inspection or cleaning, maintained on the premises for a minimum of three years and be copied to the fire code official upon request.